

Appendix B: Racial and Ethnic Groupings

The authors acknowledge that significant diversity exists within each of the racial and ethnic categories used in this report and that the use of broad categories sometimes obfuscates health disparities among smaller subgroups. The category labeled “Asian” combines persons from such diverse cultures as Japan, China, Southeast Asia, and India, and is even more diverse when it has been combined with persons from Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander cultures. The category for “Black or African American” includes both descendants of persons who were enslaved during the U.S. slave period, as well as more recent immigrants from the African continent and elsewhere. All racial and ethnic groups include persons who have recently arrived in the U.S., as well as those whose families have lived here for several generations.

Despite the inherent diversity within each category, this report is evidence that the UDOH believes it is worthwhile to aggregate health status data for persons from similar cultures to ascertain whether health status disparities exist. The report uses the racial and ethnic categories recommended by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) wherever possible. The following excerpts from the Federal Register document those categories.

The minimum categories for data on race and ethnicity for Federal statistics, program administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance reporting are defined as follows:

American Indian or Alaska Native. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Asian. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Black or African American. A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. Terms such as “Haitian” or “Negro” can be used in addition to “Black or African American.”

Hispanic or Latino. A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. The term, “Spanish origin,” can be used in addition to “Hispanic or Latino.”

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

White. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

Respondents shall be offered the option of selecting one or more racial designations. Recommended forms for the instruction accompanying the multiple response question are “Mark one or more” and “Select one or more.”¹²²

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In keeping with OMB guidance, UDOH data sources use self-report as the ideal standard for defining race and ethnicity whenever possible.

"It is important to remember that the Federal racial and ethnic data categories are social-political constructs and that they should not be interpreted as being genetic, biological, or anthropological in nature...The 1997 standards emphasize self-reporting or self-identification as the preferred method for collecting data on race and ethnicity. The standards do not establish criteria or qualifications (such as blood quantum levels) that are to be used in determining a particular individual's racial or ethnic classification. They do not tell an individual who he or she is, or specify how an individual should classify himself or herself. Self-identification for race and Hispanic or Latino origin means that the responses are based on self-perception and therefore are subjective, but by definition, the responses are accurate. In situations where self-reporting is not practicable or feasible, such as identification by personnel of funeral homes, observer identification may be used."¹²³

American Indian race is different from American Indian tribal membership. Utahns who describe themselves as of American Indian race may or may not belong to a federally recognized Utah tribe. For information about Utah tribal members, contact tribal leadership.

To provide flexibility and ensure data quality, separate questions shall be used wherever feasible for reporting race and ethnicity. When race and ethnicity are collected separately, ethnicity shall be collected first. If race and ethnicity are collected separately, the minimum designations are:

Race:

American Indian or Alaska Native
Asian
Black or African American
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
White

Ethnicity:

Hispanic or Latino
Not Hispanic or Latino¹²²

Readers have likely noticed that the categories used on the data pages throughout the report vary. The above OMB classification scheme was the goal, but several data sources did not allow for data aggregation according to this standard.